

Applicants : Brent J. Bos, Kenneth Schofield, Mark L. Larson and Niall R. Lynam
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Remarks:

The amendments and remarks presented herein are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action dated May 9, 2008.

Claims 103-124, 126-128 and 130-148 are pending in the application. Independent claim 127 has been clarified as set forth above and new claim 148 has been added. The clarifications and new claim are fully supported in the specification and drawings as originally filed. No new matter has been added.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 103-105, 107-120, 125, 126-128 and 133-147 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bechtel et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,451,822 ("Bechtel '822"), in view of Noack, U.S. Patent No. 4,355,271 ("Noack"), and in view of Stam et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,923,027 ("Stam et al."). Claim 106 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bechtel '822, Noack and Stam et al. combination, in further view of Bendicks et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,498,866. Claims 121-124 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bechtel '822, Noack and Stam et al. combination, in further view of Shiraishi, U.S. Patent No. 4,881,019. Claim 130 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bechtel '822, Noack and Stam et al. combination, in further view of Kobayashi et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,426,294. Claim 131 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bechtel '822, Noack and Stam et al. combination, in further view of Kiyomoto et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,844,682. Claim 132 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bechtel '822, Noack and Stam et al. combination, in further view of Levers, U.S. Patent No. 5,276,389.

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Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections under §103(a). However, in order to expedite prosecution and allowance of the claims, and without acquiescing in the rejection in any way, Applicants have clarified independent claim 127. Applicants submit that this clarification does not affect the scope of the claim and merely clarifies the terms that were already included in independent claim 127. This clarification is made without prejudice so that the subject matter of the original claims may be pursued in a continuation application in the future.

Applicants have amended independent claim 127 to clarify that the imaging sensor comprises a plurality of light sensing photosensor pixels. The digital filtering process smoothes the image data by adjusting values associated with individual pixels based on values associated with respective neighboring pixels at or adjacent or near the individual pixels.

Applicants submit that the combination of Bechtel '822, Noack and Stam et al. does not disclose or suggest or render obvious the interior rearview mirror system of the presently claimed invention, particularly as set forth in independent claim 127 and the claims depending therefrom. For example, neither Bechtel '822, Noack nor Stam et al. discloses or suggests an image processor that applies a digital filtering process to account for irregularities of the window in the field of view of the imaging sensor, with the digital filtering process smoothing the image data by adjusting values associated with individual pixels based on values associated with respective neighboring pixels at or adjacent or near the individual pixels.

Such a filtering process as claimed herein smoothes the image data to account for irregularities of the window in the field of view of the imaging sensor. As stated in the present application, because the irregularities, such as pits and/or scratches, are typically very small, such a smoothing or filtering process may filter out or adjust data associated with these small detected items, without significantly changing the data values associated with the relatively large rain droplets and/or fog particles which may also be present on the window.

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Accordingly, Applicants submit that the combination of Bechtel '822, Noack and Stam et al., either by itself or in further combination with any other prior art of record, does not disclose or suggest or render obvious the interior rearview mirror system of the present invention, particularly as set forth in independent claim 127 and the claims depending therefrom. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 103-124, 126-128 and 130-147 is respectfully requested.

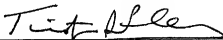
Claims 103-124, 126-128 and 130-148 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 103-124, 126-128 and 130-148 are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly and respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

BRENT J. BOS ET AL.

By: Van Dyke, Gardner, Linn & Burkhart, LLP

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